

REMARKS

Applicants elect with traverse Group I, claims 1-7.

The examiner stated that Groups I, II and III do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical feature. The examiner correctly looks to PCT Rule 13. 1 and 13.2. However, the examiner does not apply PCT Rules 13.1 and 13.2 correctly in this case.

The examiner stated that Group I and II are different because one is a reactor and the other a process for gas and liquid type reactions. The examiner also stated that Groups I and II are different because the reactor may be used to carry out gas/gas reactions for gas/solid reactions, etc., in a column type apparatus. The examiner further stated that Groups II and II are different because one is a process for gas and liquid type reactions and the other a process for hydrogenation, oxidation, ethoxylation, propoxylation or aldol condensation reactions.

In making such statements, the examiner has not correctly applied PCT Rule 13. PCT Rule 13.1 provides that the application has to relate to one invention, or to a group of inventions which is so linked as to form a single general inventive concept. Accordingly, the requirement of unity of invention is, *a priori*, met and there is no lack of unity when a group of claimed inventions is linked to form a "single general inventive concept."

In the present case, the single general inventive concept is provided by the reactor for continuously carrying out gas-liquid, liquid-liquid or gas-liquid-solid reactions. This is the special technical feature which is common among Groups I-III. PCT Rule 13.2 which states that "the expression 'special technical features' shall mean those technical features that define a contribution which each of the claimed inventions, considered as a whole, makes over the prior art." It is not enough to separate the inventions because one is directed to a process and

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one is directed to a reactor. The special technical feature should be considered and whether or not this make a progress over the prior art. Applicants believe the present reactor is novel. Therefore, unity of invention is present among Groups I-III. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the examiner's restriction requirement.

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Respectfully submitted,

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